

## ENGAGING A CARICOM VIOLENCE PREVENTION NETWORK 2019—FOURTH INSTALLMENT.

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> day of October 10am. Reply from Donald Berment.

Much thanks Christopher for your continued interest in the **PROPOSED PROJECT** which **hopefully will bear the name of CARICOM Violence Prevention Network (CVPN)**.

CLARIFICATION is indeed necessary **to engage** with the well-respected CARICOM NETWORK and your last email to me, list a number of areas for indulgement and my continuing education, plus giving due appreciation for the volume of work accomplished by your team since 1973.

Although I am intimately associated with the Trinidad and Tobago state of **CRIMINALITY**; have read some of what is happening in Jamaica and the wider world population; the rest of the CARICOM Member States and its Associates, have not yet been researched, to get a true picture of what is happening in their homelands as regards growing **CRIMINALITY**. You may be in a better position than me, to inform on your member States circumstances.

**Of course, my intention is to do an internet search and use other research tools to be assisted in that direction and address some of your questions raised in your email. I can only briefly comment on a couple said questions here, until further work is done and/or with your help.**

However, my years in Experiencia here and my limited travelling outside, accurately pinpoints the critical need to proceed with a **Regional Crime Prevention Network** and one designed to include a vibrant and committed Civil Society; **AN ACTION THAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED WITH THE FULL INVOLVEMENT OF CARICOM HERE, BY ITS NATURE AND COMPOSITION.**

Christopher, **Partisan Political action** has failed miserably in many of their community development projects, when it is strictly partisan outreached. I do not know what the constraints of Jamaica's VPN are, but I can speak with authority of the constraints within Trinidad and Tobago's National Crime Prevention Programme (NCP). It was conceived by a Permanent Secretary of the ruling party, when she was a Police Officer for many years prior and accepted by the Ministry of National Security. A Retired Major General was contracted to coordinate the Programme, one Rodney Smart and removed 2 years later to be made CEO of our Disaster Management Facility (ODPM). This was a critical setback for the great efforts made by him, although three (3) Community Liaison Officers, left or were fired in a period of one (1) year, emphasizing that the **strictly partisan approach** was not working.

Yes it was a **Pilot Project** in three of our Regional Corporations, Chaguanas, Tobago and Diego Martin, **the latter in which I functioned at weekly Thursday meetings for nine (9) months** and saw the start of **raw party politics**, in what was supposed to be a **National Programme**, involving the three (3) Regions. The Head Operations of NCP are managed by a Secretariat, assisted by an inter-ministerial committee of our major Ministries, working with an academic unit, the

University of Trinidad and Tobago, the Crime and Problem Analysis Unit (CAPA) of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) and at community level by Community Crime Prevention Councils (CCPC), under Liaison Officers working with their Councillors of the respective Regional Corporations.

**NCPP has failed with all that participation and structure**, primarily because of the CRITICAL NON-PARTICIPATION of genuine civil society involvement at the highest level and at the bottom Community level, alongside **an independent funding source, managed and contributed to by civil society**. Funding was restricted to what projects could give the party instant voter appeal at the top and the Liaison Officers had to manage Regional District Populations, some 10 such Districts in most cases, of over 100,000 Electors in most cases, without a another Level in NCPP, **FIELD OFFICERS IN EACH ELECTORAL DISTRICT**, contracted to be non-political for the period of their contract.. Many large Companies do not have that staff or population responsibility, lying with one person, although the Liaison Officers worked with Councillors of the Corporation, **there is a constant threat of and fear of crime** and the Local Government System is finally being reviewed at Parliament, after three (3) plus decades of inefficiency.

**The 2 day Workshops** opened the door here to visualize the participation of **CARICOM** in a **Regional Approach** to manage the growing **CRIMINALITY**, by having the nature and composition of CARICOM's Input in **the creation of a never before established**, Caribbean Regional Network, the **ELECTRONIC VERSION** in THE FIRST INSTANCE and God only knows what else thereafter.

Some of your questions are self-answered and the others will be answered in due course, with your patience and your knowledge of what inputs you and the Secretariat can make in this novel **MISSING MIDDLE**, to so many of great initiatives developed and implemented in the past.

As I said very early, this is not a **"ME"** thing, it is an **"OUR"** thing. All our Caribbean Homelands will profit, especially where **CRIMINALITY** is rampant and where it is not, as a **PREVENTION DETERRENT** to keep their low **CRIMINALITY** just so. God Bless Brother and to your email List.

Signed .....Donald D. Berment, Housing Specialist, HSDS/NGA/DVC. 638-6184.

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**Happy World Architectural Day on Monday the 7<sup>th</sup> day of October 2019, With the theme Housing for All.**

